



U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
1225 New York Ave. NW – Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005

--Media Advisory--

Martinez Resigns from EAC

For Immediate Release
Jeannie Layson
April
(202) 566-3100

Contact:

2006

WASHINGTON – U.S. Election Assistance Commission Vice Chairman Ray Martinez III announced today that he is resigning, effective June 30, 2006.

"I am proud to have been significantly involved in the many accomplishments of this fine agency," Martinez wrote in his resignation letter to President George W. Bush. "I am also pleased to have emphasized, throughout my tenure, the importance of achieving a proper balance of responsibilities between federal, state and local governments in achieving the promise of the Help America Vote Act."

Martinez said his decision to resign was based solely on his desire to spend more time with his family and to return home to Texas.

Martinez's replacement will be nominated by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. The new commissioner will serve the remainder of Martinez's term, which expires in December 2007.

"The voters of the United States have been fortunate to have Ray Martinez on the EAC since its first day of work to implement the Help America Vote Act," said EAC Chairman Paul DeGregorio. "Thanks to his leadership and hard work, we were able to not only distribute all of the Help America Vote Act funding, but also adopt the 2005 Voluntary Voting System Guidelines and implement other important voting reforms. Ray Martinez is a public servant who always puts principle before politics, and the voters of America were fortunate to have him at the helm of election reform."

Martinez, a native of Alice, Texas, has devoted almost his entire career to public service. Before joining EAC, Martinez ran a solo law practice in Austin focused on legislative and regulatory matters with a client base consisting primarily of county governments. Prior to starting his own law practice, Martinez worked for President Bill Clinton in the White House as deputy assistant for intergovernmental affairs, and also served as regional director for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Dallas.

In 1993, Martinez was appointed White House liaison to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and later as special assistant to the President in the White House Office of Political Affairs. Martinez began his career in public service working in the Texas Legislature, first as a legislative aide to State Representative Sylvester Turner (D-Houston) and later as a legislative liaison in the Texas attorney general's office.

EAC is an independent bipartisan commission created by the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). It is charged with administering payments to states and developing guidance to meet HAVA requirements, implementing election administration improvements, adopting voluntary voting system guidelines, certifying voting systems and serving as a national clearinghouse and resource of information regarding election administration.

The four EAC commissioners are Paul DeGregorio, chairman; Ray Martinez III, vice chairman; Donetta Davidson and Gracia Hillman.

NOTE: Resignation letter follows.



U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

1225 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W., SUITE 1100
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

April 10, 2006

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

It has been a great honor and privilege to serve as one of four initial appointees to the United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC). I am deeply honored at the trust you placed in me in October 2003 in nominating me to this important and historic agency charged with implementing what is, in my view, one of the most significant federal laws passed in recent history – the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). However, after much deliberation and thought, I write today to respectfully submit my resignation from the EAC, effective June 30, 2006.

I am leaving the EAC strictly for personal and family considerations. My wife, Beth, and I have been blessed with two wonderful children – Sofia Grace and Lorenzo Elder – and we have decided that it is in the best interest of our family to return home to Austin, Texas and focus on our future. Moreover, the recent and unexpected death of my mother has reinforced our desire to be closer to our immediate family.

It has been more than three years since I was first approached by former Senator Tom Daschle to serve on the EAC. After a longer than expected confirmation process, I have now served as an EAC commissioner for nearly two and a half years. During that time, the EAC has made significant progress in helping to improve all facets of election administration. Notably, in its short history, the EAC has: (1) fully distributed historic and unprecedented federal funds to every eligible jurisdiction; (2) adopted the first set of revised voluntary voting system guidelines governing the accessibility and security of electronic voting equipment; (3) released the first set of voluntary guidance regarding statewide voter registration lists; (4) commissioned significant research and data collection designed to fulfill our obligation to serve as a “national clearinghouse” of election administration practices; and, in the months ahead, is (5) poised to transfer the national voting system certification program from the National Association of State Election Directors to the EAC, marking the first time in our country’s history that the federal government will be involved in the certification of voting system hardware and software.

I am proud to have been significantly involved in the many accomplishments of this fine agency. I am also pleased to have emphasized, throughout my tenure, the importance of achieving a proper balance of responsibilities between federal, state and local governments in achieving the promise of HAVA. Let me be clear in stating my support for the great tradition in our country of having the process of election administration be an obligation largely

reserved to state and local governments. And yet, I also believe there is a compelling need for the EAC to remain as a permanent part of the election administration landscape – to work with administrators, advocates and academics alike in collaboratively improving all aspects of election administration, including the technology we use, the procedures which govern our elections, and the people involved in this process. The EAC represents a success story, owing largely to the bipartisan support of the United States Congress, and in particular, to the leadership of Senators Christopher J. Dodd and Mitch McConnell and Congressmen Steny H. Hoyer and Bob Ney. I am grateful for their constant support and guidance, and that of their staff, over the past several years.

It should also be noted that the achievements of the EAC have occurred in large measure because of the hard work and professionalism of an exceptional group of dedicated agency employees. I am privileged to have had the opportunity to work alongside such outstanding public servants. Likewise, the ongoing commitment to fairness and equality exhibited by state and local election administrators from throughout the country has ensured that today, the mechanics of our great democracy has a renewed sense of focus on issues pertaining to both “access” and “integrity” in the process – two goals which should not be regarded, in my view, as mutually exclusive.

There is clearly more much work to be done to achieve the level of improvement that was expected when HAVA was overwhelmingly passed by Congress. As a commissioner, I have been vocal in expressing my concerns regarding what I view as a disturbingly negative trend in the confidence of the America public in the integrity of our election outcomes. It is my sincerest hope that, in the months and years to come, I will be able to utilize the privilege of my garnered experience at the EAC to continue to offer sound and realistic solutions to improve the perception of fundamental fairness in the conduct of our elections. Still, I firmly believe we have already made significant progress since the passage of HAVA and the creation of the EAC. And, this progress should be attributed not to any one political party or philosophy, but to the collective efforts of so many individuals who have put aside partisan interests for the sake of furthering an American agenda. I am most proud to have been a part of that effort.

Finally, only in our great country could the child of an auto mechanic and homemaker – growing up in South Texas with few financial resources but an abundance of love and support – rise through the ranks to eventually serve at the request of not just one, but two, U.S. presidents. I am most appreciative for the chance to serve my country in this regard and in doing so, to once again fulfill my life-long dream of public service. That dream does not end today. Perhaps in many ways, it is just beginning.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Martinez III". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "R" and a distinct "III" at the end.

RAY MARTINEZ III

Commissioner

United States Election Assistance Commission